

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 08238238 7

COLONEL AUSTIN RICE
CHARLOTTE BAKER RICE

A Memorial

JUN 28 1906

The New York Public Library

From



Chas. B. Rice

Boston, June 28 - 1906

(Rice)

AN



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

COLONEL AUSTIN RICE
CHARLOTTE BAKER RICE
OF CONWAY

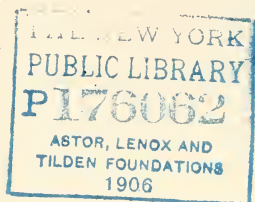
A Memorial

By their son
CHARLES BAKER RICE

Danvers, October, 1905

BOSTON
PRINTED FOR THE FAMILY
1905

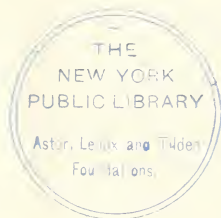
12



It is written :

The just shall live by faith. Romans 1 : 17









The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

Psalm 65 : 13.

A MEMORIAL OF LIFE

The line, "The Just Shall Live by Faith," is upon the memorial stone that stands by my father's grave. The words might fitly be thought of as written above the doors of many dwellings that have been planted from the early generations upon these New England farms. The life within these homes has been reverent and trustful and cheerful and in a large measure steadfast in righteousness. The land itself has grown to be sacred. Every one must wish to do whatever he may to preserve and prolong upon these fields and within these dwellings the memories and powers of that Christian and manly faith which has so enriched the lives of the fathers through the days of their pilgrimage.

An appropriate commemorative discourse was preached on the Sabbath following my father's death by Rev. Arthur Shirley, the faithful pastor of the church to which he belonged; but many features of his life must be more fully known to his son, and the unex-

hausted sentiments of honor and affection are also moving me to this further memorial.

I do not write altogether out of my merely personal feelings and judgments. There was a concurrence of opinion to which reference may properly be made. Dr. Samuel Harris, lately of Yale Divinity School, whose first pastorate was at Conway, said to me long afterward that he thought of my father and mother as constituting as nearly an ideal head of a Christian household as any he had ever known. His exact words were stronger. There have been many other marks of appreciation. But one's best personal feelings are likely to be sober.

I had knowledge of my father throughout a large part of his mature life. It has been many years since he was with us. I should be peculiarly unwilling to speak concerning him otherwise than in truth and soberness. He did not himself practice nor love extravagance in speech. I remember how even in early manhood his presence put a check upon me if I was ready to speak in any public place with undue vehemence or with any unexact scope of statement, as if whatever I said before him had

need to be brought to the square of reason. I shall be with him again in the eternal state. And I do not desire to forget the companionship in the present time of that Father Himself of men whose most clear and solid reason puts its constant and grateful restraints upon me. But of a Christian home, with a Christian father and mother in it, one can always think both truly and happily.

My father, Austin Rice, was born in Conway in this state, July 16th, 1794. The house in which he lived and which is still standing had been built then about ten years. But his grandfather, Israel Rice, had cleared the spot and set up a building on it — among the first in the town — in 1765.

Conway lies upon the eastern slope of the Green Mountains, as they extend southward into Massachusetts and among what may be called the foothills of the range. The old historic town of Deerfield, settled almost a hundred years before upon its open meadows, which the Indians had tilled and fought for, and of whose territory Conway had once been a part, lies next at the east, reaching to the

Connecticut river. The Conway township thus from its eastern ridges and from all its higher points overlooks the valley region eastward and southward to the river and far beyond it. Its hills, less elevated than those further at the west, are also less cold and bleak. They are covered with green pastures and forests; and they shelter plateaus and valleys of fertile lands upon their sides and at their feet. They are of graceful forms, casting everywhere as one goes among them their changing aspects upon the skies. They give forth springs upon every side; and there are many brooks and channels with stony beds, so that from almost every dwelling in the town there may be heard in the stillness of the night the sounds of the running waters.

The Deerfield river, flowing here in a south-westerly direction, forms the northern boundary of the town, separating it from Shelburne. The Deerfield valley is of various and shifting beauty. It is lined in part with its narrow intervale lands, or broader meadows, and in part the hills crowd closely upon it. Along the whole Conway border the river is pressed within a narrow gorge, sunk by steep

descending banks two hundred or three hundred feet below the general level of the neighboring uplands. There was no crossing the stream here from town to town in all the earlier times, and until comparatively recent years, except by a single ferry-boat, hard to reach and doubtful after every freshet to be found.

The South river enters the Deerfield from the west at near the northwestern corner of the town. It rises in the neighboring town of Ashfield, and descends in its swift course of twelve or fifteen miles nearly as many hundred feet. It was the most clear and choice of streams before the mills stood upon it. The water-falls which the glaciers made as they pushed it in places out of its more ancient channel, still remain not wholly despoiled of their beauty. In the lower part of its course, as it approaches the Deerfield, the channel of the South river becomes also deep and its banks are steep and at some points almost or quite precipitous.

The two streams as they draw together form thus a kind of promontory between them. The lands upon it, after the ascent of the banks

is passed, are mostly level or lightly sloping toward the water courses on either side. A line of hills stretches across the base of this triangular promontory, a mile or more at the west from the point of junction of the rivers. Seen from the plain the western sky has a lifted and picturesque horizon. Across the northern and southern valleys hills of many forms are in sight. To the east the view is wide, and there may be seen the level line of the Sugar Loaf peak and its northward-stretching connected range in Deerfield, and still further the long, higher, parallel top of Tobey and the slopes of the distant uplands on the eastern side of the Connecticut valley.

To the child the earth is the form of field and sky that he began first to see; and that range and circle of lands and skies is still to me the natural pattern of the world.

The hills at the west have both pasture lands and forests. The beech and maple are the more common trees, with many birches and oaks and elms. Great chestnuts are to be seen here and there, easily distinguished from far off by the lads of the neighborhood, and counted friendly. There are also other nut

bearing trees, all in like manner characteristic and recognizable in distant forms, and each with its seed in itself or upon the earth, after its kind. Pines and hemlocks are upon the lower lands near the streams. But the maple, wherever it grows in lands that suit it, is the first of New England trees. The maple loves the soil of the rocky slopes lying eastward and southward. It is a plant of great rocks and sunshine. Its juices carry sweetness through its trunk, solid almost as the stones. It can grow gigantic in its stock beyond three times the compass of the arms of a man. It is a creation of individual life. It stands often alone, or in groups that shape themselves as a single tree. It lifts its massy top far against the hills or upon the heavens, green or golden and scarlet, springtime or summer or autumn, and strong and steadfast, majestic and beautiful in every season.

The main road crosses this table-plain from south to north, a little to the west of its center. It is a county road, though until these later years it was swallowed up rather than continued to the northern Shelburne shore at its steep and doubtful ferrying place. To the south

there were three miles of road, partly hilly but not difficult, leading to the Conway village. The neighborhood land is divided into six or seven farms, but in the earlier times there were twice as many, and the small cellar-holes still mark the sites of former houses.

The neighborhood itself has been known almost from the time of the first occupation of the town as the "Broomshire District" or "Broomshire" alone. One of the first settlers upon it made brooms in the winter seasons of stripped walnut wood, and took them to Deerfield for sale. He had first to walk the eight miles to Deerfield to hire a horse and "pung" or sled to carry his brooms. He sold his brooms often not for cash, but in part for pork, and he got one pound and a half of the meat for a broom. From this primitive commerce the district had its name.

My father's farm lay upon the southern side of the Broomshire district and had the South river in part for its southern boundary. The plain old white farm-house stands a quarter of a mile from the river, upon the higher ground, though here the ascent is not steep. It looks eastward upon fields of mowing and tillage,

and southward across the river to hills and higher lands beyond. There is a group of maples at the north, between the house and the barns. A great elm stands at the southeast. At the west, on the opposite of the road, is a row of maples, and beyond and above the maples an apple orchard, and beyond the orchard the western hills. The trees shade the yards, but do not darken much the house. Some of these maples my father remembered helping to set out, in his childhood.

From the first, until very recent years, the district schoolhouse stood upon the land of the farm near the river. The town had no possession except by the free occupation of generations of teachers and children. The playgrounds were in the pasture fields and among the pines of the forest not far off, and by the banks of the river and the small brook that empties into it. Brooks and rivers not too deep are themselves everywhere bright and faithful playmates of the children. There is no end to the changes they can bring to their companions, sitting by their banks. The South river could be walked upon or even crossed at spots in the summer months, stepping upon

the smooth stones. The flattened and rounded stones, black and gray and blue and white, were for the walls of playhouses and for tables and furnishings. It was a thing of grief that they looked less shining taken upon the banks than when they lay with the summer waters washing over them. The girls of the school planned and mostly builded these houses, the boys only with persuasion, and often with pretended or sincere disdain, bringing the stones. In the deeper waters beneath the bridge the sheep from the neighboring farms were washed before their shearing in the spring. There were interesting exercises as they went unwilling down the steep paths and over the gnarled roots of trees into the basin. It would have been a pleasing thing to the children of the school if sheep washings might have been continuous and if recesses could have had no end. Great floods have swept down the bridge and the pier, and one abutment alone remains. New ways and crossings have been made. The very place is changed, and the feet of the children are no longer by the soft running brook, or upon the blue stones of the river.

Each school, or each term of school, in those

days had its law unto itself, much beyond what it does now. Few rules, or none, were in force for all the schools of the town. The authority of the general school committee was but slightly felt. The government lay wholly with the teachers, or with the teacher and scholars together, or sometimes with the scholars wholly. The schools were unequal in quality, much more even than now, according to what the teacher might happen to be. These schools had their advantages. Any boy could get into whatever class in any study he could reach; and the younger boys had zeal to catch up with those ahead — or, some of them. But there was often outbreking rudeness about the schoolhouse and within it, beyond what would be tolerated now.

My father was a teacher of schools for many years in his early manhood, teaching in the winter and working on the farm for the rest of the year, as was common then. He was in repute as a disciplinarian, and was often engaged in neighboring towns for schools reckoned hard. I do not think that he was particularly severe, but he was steady in purpose and apt to be obeyed. He taught once or

twice in his own district in this schoolhouse at the foot of the hill by the river. My mother, Charlotte Baker, was one of his scholars.

In the division of the town for schools there was a range of farms on the southern side of South river that went with the Broomshire district, though Broomshire proper included only the tract at the north of the stream. The Baker farm was in this southern section, upon a table-land with bordering hills, higher than the Broomshire plain but much smaller. The farm was one of varied resources, with soils both light and strong, with timbered hills and many fruits and copious and beautiful springs of water. There were two houses upon the farm, and the one in which my mother's childhood and youth were passed was in clear view of my father's home, a mile distant, across the valley.

When my father kept that school there was no thought in the minds of either of these young people of the relation that came afterward to exist between them. At least there was none at all in the mind of Charlotte Baker, though there was a due measure of admiration for the master. I learned by questionings of

her, late in life, how the thought was made after a time to occur to her, with surprise and appropriate satisfaction. Concerning the origin of such things in my father's mind I never inquired. My mother has told me too of her visiting at the place before her marriage, and of the songs of many birds she heard in the morning hours, for it is a place of birds.

They were married Oct. 23, 1822, my mother being then twenty years of age. On the wedding night, when the merry making was over and the guests were gone, the young wife, shrinking in feeling but steady in purpose, brought a Bible and said, "Let us begin right." Neither of them was then a member of the church. But the right beginning was made, and the family worship, evening and morning, was never interrupted while they lived. If there had not been this beginning it might have made a difference in that home through the sixty years almost that followed greater than all differences that could have been made in all other things.

The married life of my father and mother began with a strong basis of mutual respect, as well as affection. Both these sentiments

stood firm under the wear of time and life. Sentiments and principles ran close together with them both, so that their sentiments did not fall apart and blow away. The two were indeed in many things alike, or well fitted to each other. They were both of good bodily stock and frame. They were both used, sufficiently, to the common work of life, and capable in it. They were both practical and sensible in good measure, and disposed to be reasonable. Neither was noticeably brilliant or uncomfortably ambitious. Both were intelligent. Both were public spirited. Both were fairly vigorous and thorough in what they undertook. Both of them had, or came to have, a steady religious purpose. And with both of them religion was a matter of reverence and obedience and of daily care and hope and courage.

They joined the Congregational church by profession of faith, Sept. 6, 1829. My father told me, but a few days before his death, some things relating to his earlier religious experiences. It was, he thought, when he was eight or ten years old that his grandmother, Lydia Sherman Rice, spoke with him on the

matter of religion and admonished him as to what he ought to do. As my father told me the story we were sitting at the southern end of the old, long kitchen, in the very place where they were when he was thus spoken to in that distant childhood. His grandmother's words made an impression upon him and he went up into his room in what was then a newly builded northern part of the house and spent a considerable time in prayer. He felt at that time, he said, "that his relation with God was changed," he "began to have love for the Sabbath and for religious exercises and the society of Christian people." He felt a concern for his brother, a little older than himself, that he might be a Christian. But he was subject to variations and fallings backward. Reviewing the period he remarked upon the fact that but little care was then had with respect to young Christians. There were no Sabbath schools, and little was done to bring the children or young people into the church, and he said, "I think, with proper care I might have been saved, perhaps, from many relapses."

As he continued through the years of early manhood and until his marriage in this not

wholly settled state and without publicly committing himself as a Christian, we may not be sure that he would have set out to "begin right" and to establish from the first a Christian home unless his young wife herself had been ready and clear in proposing it.

In those days every able bodied man was required to train in arms and my father was enrolled in the universal "floodwood militia." He liked a horse and was a good rider and a good manager of horses. He had also a capacity for order and method. He became colonel of a cavalry regiment in the "Old Hampshire County" first brigade, receiving his commission from Gov. Levi Lincoln. He was regarded as a good officer, and it was understood that he might have held a higher rank if he had not declined promotion. His father had been colonel before him. It was thought by some of my boyish schoolmates, with much failure of forecast, that I might be also at some time colonel. My father was usually called among the neighbors by his title only. The place when spoken of from other parts of the town was "Col. Rice's," but near at hand it was simply "the Colonel's."

In his earlier active life my father was regarded by some as stern and severe. I sometimes heard him spoken of in my childhood as if he were proud. I scarcely think that pride could ever have been justly charged upon him, even at that period. But I suppose he must have had some vein of natural sternness. He had too a strong natural dislike of things shiftless and inefficacious, as well as things dishonest, and he may have expressed himself concerning such things, when he expressed himself at all, in terms somewhat more severe than was most agreeable, at that period of his life. But it is the business of every man with Christian good sense, or with any manly good sense at all, to be making improvements upon his natural dispositions. My father did it. Comparing, not the judgments but the remembered facts of childhood with the observations of later years, I can see that there must have gone on with him a ripening and mellowing of temper along with the growth of Christian wisdom and grace. This is appropriate to life. In his later years I do not think that any one could ever have thought him austere or harsh. He had passed over on the opposite side,

though he may always have been liable to be affected with some dislike toward things useless and wicked.

Among the boys, my early schoolmates, it was thought that I was made to walk with uncommon straightness at home. I never walked anywhere with too much straightness. It was supposed that I had, or was liable to have, severe punishings. I was gibed at upon due occasion with respect to the whippings I should get at home. I never got any whippings, not once. I needed them. But I recollect the distinct impression I had that if my father should ever judge it necessary to enter upon a proceeding of that sort the experience might be likely to become serious. My father was obeyed at home. But he secured obedience by reasonableness and firmness, and most of all, it has sometimes seemed, by the constant expectation that he would be at once obeyed. In the later years the grandchildren of the place, whenever they were there, were accustomed to sit by him in their small chairs at family worship. If ever they were not quiet at first he would tell them that they must be still, and they would be still. Knowing that they were

not all patterns of natural stillness, and also that he would not in any case undertake the work of discipline upon them there, I once asked him what he would do if they should be uneasy and should not mind him, and he answered partly in humor but altogether in truth, "that is not a supposable case."

None of us ever saw our father in a passion, or in any nearness to it, whether the provocation came from beast or man; though I think this steadiness of temper came only of practised self-control.

My father's father died when he was but about fifty years of age. His grandfather lived to a later date, dying in 1833, ninety years old. There was also an older brother of my father's.* Adjustments respecting property were thus somewhat complicated. They were arranged in every part with good and perfect understanding. The understanding was made to be distinct and perfect partly in order that it might be good. Careful legal agreements were repeatedly made between my father and his mother and brother. It is illustrative of the

* Caleb Rice, a graduate of Williams College, lawyer, sheriff, and the first mayor of the city of Springfield.

times, and of the changings of times, to find engagements on the part of my father to keep a certain number of sheep for his mother's "use and behoof." I can remember the spinning and knitting of the wool from those sheep by my grandmother.

The Conway farm was a good one for its size. It had fifty acres of fine mowing and tillage land, and something more than one hundred acres of pasturing and woodland. Later there were added outlying pasturing lots in the town of Hawley. My father soon began the business of fattening sheep, being the leader in it in that region. The sheep were bought in spring or summer in central New York, driven home in the early fall, fatted rapidly in winter, and taken by drovers or market men on foot to Brighton market. The business was a paying one until the "Western Railroad" reaching to Albany with other roads beyond, brought in a distant competition, cutting off its profits. After that the place was turned to dairying.

The farm was well managed, and gave usually fair returns in its different departments. My father was careful and prompt and exact in his own business. He liked to have

things in shape. He wished to have the pasture bars put up and the gates and doors closed and shut, whether we thought they needed to be or not. He wanted nothing left at loose ends. He had places for his tools and kept them there, and he made his boys do it. He stored away his cutters and sleds in summer. He kept his carts and wagons and machines under cover from rain summer and winter, and kept them whole and in good shape. He made the boys rake after the carts clean, and cut up the bushes by the walls. He disliked all wastefulness, and I do not know but he disliked all disorder even more. It was characteristic of him that almost in the last hours of his life and when he was scarcely conscious of what he said he repeated several times the words partly from Scripture, and partly from current annotations on it — “God is a God of order and not of confusion.”

But farmers in those days did not grow rapidly rich, even if they do now. I remember the consideration given to the buying of a new harness. The getting of a wagon was a graver matter and turned on the crops and sales of the year. To the boys of the farm, driving then miles to meeting on Sundays, and with other

teams and neighbors in procession and in comparison after or before them, the business of harness and wagon was serious if not Sabbatic. I do not think that the concern taken by the daughters of the place in such matters was much less. These considerations concerning expenditure were had not wholly as a matter of blank necessity, nor for thought of saving only, but also as a matter of rational control upon the desires of life befitting to man. Other uses of money too were kept in mind both by my father and mother.

Notwithstanding his carefulness my father met with some heavy losses in his farm business. Most of these were due to the occasional contemplative rascality of men to whom meats and live stock were sold. Two such men cleared to the west, each with \$500 or \$600 out of the farm steers or wethers in his pockets — and serving others of the neighbors in the same way. If these men are now living they are probably managers or promoters of some illusory financial stock company.

In the case of one of these fraudulent purchases of farm animals, my father bore a loss which might properly have been thrown, as

many would have thought, upon another man. And shortly after, in a transaction when the conditions were reversed and when he stood himself in a place corresponding to that of the other man in the previous instance, he took again upon himself the loss, with no effort at all to throw it off. This was characteristic, yet any sensible man would doubtless have done the like, since to any such man the being called to suffer himself unfairly would be a much less serious matter than the being the occasion of bringing suffering unfairly upon some one else.

But my father's husbandry was, on the whole, prosperous, and he came to be a well-to-do farmer, after the moderate measure of those times. In some outside enterprises in which he engaged he was less fortunate, and I suppose it must be admitted that in entering upon them he was less sagacious. In these connections he met with heavy losses, by which he was for several years much embarrassed. He made little complaint. He had at least the comfort of thinking that he had meant in what he did to help forward the business of the town. He had, however, outside the farm an interest in

a grist-mill for which he made the purchases of grain, and which gave fair returns.

His judgment in matters of business had thus its limits of accuracy and its liabilities to failure. But my father's most estimable gifts of mind were those that had their exercise apart from the matter of money returns in business. As to concerns of character and on the lines of righteousness his judgment was most clear and admirable. The balance of his thoughts in all the moral interests of life was level and steady. In these the most real of human affairs, though his gains were more slow than he would have wished, they were not much directly broken up and set backward after such a sort as happened several times to his savings in things measured by money.

My father and mother led a busy life for many years, after what is common to farmers. I do not call it of necessity hard. The labors of the farm abroad and even within doors are lightened with much variety. They are in close connection with the elastic and lively powers of nature. And they are fitted to awaken the most grateful thoughts of dependence upon God and of nearness to Him. Both my father

and mother loved the sights and sounds of every season, and took interest in the growths and appointments appropriate to each. In March they saw the boys of the place tap the maple trees, and boil the sap — growing yellow over the fires. Then came the spring along the water courses, waking the frogs and birds and touching the grasses and trees. My mother thought much of the vegetable garden, and had care for seeds and herbs. She had a mind for mints and sweet ferns where they grew, and all berries. She could tell the smell of the tasselled cornfield. She considered and knew in the fall what apples should be taken for drying and what for sauce, and she caused them to be pared and quartered or sliced, as was most fit, by both girls and boys gathered together not unwillingly in the evenings in the old kitchen. And upon these occasions my father submitted himself graciously and ostentatiously to her direction. They both liked the melon crop, a production beset and made precarious often by risks beyond the vicissitudes of New England climate. They loved the sound of the soft rains upon the mown grass — the fields once mown and green with the midsummer second

spring time. If the rain caught out hay or oats, the rowen was coming up. My father knew a thrifty steer and a good solid ox team. In the last weeks of his life he watched the bright eyed calves in the orchard west of the house, and talked jestingly and encouragingly to them when they lowed for their suppers. In winter there were fires and shelter and "a good measure of health" to be thankful for, and the barns with hay and grain and cattle, and the birds that my mother might feed.

A wholesome devoutness lighted up life and helped it not to be hard and heavy. Family prayers, evening and morning, were never omitted, nor ever much shortened from their moderate and appropriate length. In the evening the Scripture reading was selected for the time. In the morning it was by course from "Scott's Bible." The "practical observations" were read, but not the "notes." The New Testament was taken for this orderly use somewhat more frequently than the Old. But the Bible was read throughout I think seven or eight times. My father prayed with reverence for all things needed. But even in times when a member of the household was sick, or on oppo-

site occasions as if a child had returned to the home, while the prayer did not miss its special petition and thanksgiving, it was still first of all a Christian prayer, having respect to the soul and the kingdom of God. Sometimes we were ready to wish that the proportions might have been changed. But our father knew that the things of the Christian gospel are always the most timely things, and always in looking back we saw that the prayer should not have been changed.

The days of fasting and thanksgiving that belonged each in the year were both kept. The festivities of thanksgiving were not omitted wholly, even in times of sickness or sadness. Upon one occasion when my father was sick and his recovery doubtful, he said to me, "I have told your mother that I wished thanksgiving to be kept as usual — according to her judgment."

The house had its papers and books in large measure for those days. The *Cultivator* came from Albany. There was the old *National Intelligencer* for many years, with the debates in Congress; afterward the *Tribune* and later the *Springfield Republican*, always the County

paper from Greenfield and always the *Boston Recorder* passing into the *Congregationalist*. In the kitchen cupboard and in divers desks were old histories and books of travel; Scott's Napoleon, Knickerbocker's History of New York, a fearful and barbarous life of field marshal Suwarrow, and works of Chateaubriand, Good's book of Nature, Smelley's Natural Philosophy, and such like. There was no Shakespeare, but a Bunyan and a copy of the Paradise Lost, old with my first remembrance of it. Later many volumes were added. Then there was a share from the first in the Social Library at the village, a modest, invaluable collection, mostly of histories and books of travel, open to be drawn from fortnightly on Thursdays after the church meeting, though it was not kept at the meeting house. The books went and came in a green flannel bag holding much good.

My father was fond of history. The winter evenings brought about him the great things of the past. He liked the lives of eminent and steadfast men. Samuel Adams was a man much to his mind, and William the Silent. Speaking with him in his later years I found

that he had drawn in his thoughts a full comparison between this father of the Dutch Republic and Washington. He made mention of the greater difficulties by which William was beset, and said he doubted if his work were not as great as that of Washington. He knew well the conspicuous eminence in these lines of life of these two men together.

There was much reading aloud in these evenings. My father himself would read either aloud or silently often until he fell asleep. The children of the place remember well the expression of his countenance when sometimes the book dropped from his hands. Then to become wakeful—or always indeed near the end of every winter evening—he went with his lantern to the barn. It was partly to see that everything was right, but partly, as we always thought, for his stay was not short, it was because the barn was a place where he worshiped God.

There were four children, a daughter, a son, and two daughters.* It was the evening rule that we should attend to

* Lois W., Charlotte M., Elizabeth C. They married respectively Thomas Hale of Castine, Zeno Russell of Pittsfield, and Henry Tracy of Toledo.

our lessons for an hour before plays or anything else. With the younger sisters if the rule was relaxed the supervision was not given up. Their father made them stand diligently by him while they parsed their words and worked their sums.

Besides these four there were other children of the place. It was the usage of our father and mother to take into the family children who had lost their own parents, one or both. They might be from six to ten years old when they were taken. They stayed usually until they were eighteen or twenty, and they had a small sum of money as the case required or admitted when they left. There was nearly always one such boy or girl in the household, sometimes more than one of each. They had a home given them, and they themselves gave help and strength to the home. There was but slight difference between the life or family estate of these children and the own children of the family. They were alike cherished and remembered, the living and the dead. Twelve persons known to me were thus brought into the household. I think there were one or two others only partly within the reach of my re-

membrance or knowledge. I think that this usage of my father and mother made a large addition to the usefulness and value of their household life. It might be greatly to the general advantage if in these times it were more commonly followed.

My father was frequently guardian for orphaned children, undertaking the charge at the request of their parents before their death. Among these were some of those who were adopted into the household. The settlement of estates came also occasionally into his hands. And being a justice of the peace he kept forms of legal papers for various uses, and did some conveyancing and other legal business after a manner still not uncommon in our country towns. But he kept clear of all litigation in the courts wherever it was possible. He had stoutly the New England habit and liking with respect to arbitration. He put and advised to be put into every engagement wherever it could be needed the standard provision that in case of any disagreement "the matter should be submitted to three disinterested men, one to be chosen by each of the parties and the third man by

these two," it being always added, "and their decision shall be final."

My father's and mother's house was always hospitable, and it had many guests of relatives and friends, with frequent sprinklings of ministers and teachers. They went themselves also upon occasional expeditions of visiting, driving to neighboring or somewhat distant towns, and meaning that family and friendly ties should not be lightly broken or lost. They gave themselves liberty to attend religious gatherings or public observances of any sort, within reasonable limits of time and distance, and they did not fasten themselves wholly to the farm.

They seldom failed to attend the regular fortnightly Thursday afternoon meetings of the church. The children as they became members of the church, were encouraged to attend these week-day meetings. The farm work even on busy days was usually planned so that it could be left for this purpose. The Sunday meetings were almost never missed. Three or four times, I can remember, in the worst winter snows the teams were stuck in the drifts and we turned back of necessity

when the shovelling grew hopeless. Possibly there may have been one or two such snow storms in which we did not set out at all, though I remember none. I do not think my father ever stayed at home for any rain storm whatever until the very latest years of his life. In winters the large old double green sleigh with four seats and elastic capacities took regularly to meeting beside the family, other people along the road that had no means of conveyance. My father had for many years a class of young men in the Sunday-school, in which he was greatly interested. They went carefully through all the books of Moses, as things then were, and if they found in them less difficulty than we do they did not perhaps miss altogether the instruction which the books may contain.

Speaking in meeting was not what my father's thoughts ran on most, but he took his share in it faithfully after a sense of duty. Neighborhood meetings were held for many years in summer on Sunday afternoons or evenings at the schoolhouse, and in winter at the various dwelling houses in the district. My father could state his views reasonably

and clearly, but he was not fluent, nor specially effective in public speech, except by what weight went with his opinions and character.

He had, however, a rare capacity to handle his tongue by keeping it still whenever that was best. He knew with singular wisdom when it was best. His avoidance of harmful or foolish gossip was total, sheer and stark. I have never known anything altogether like it. It was so complete that it did not seem to be hard for him, though it must often have been hard. Things that came to his knowledge unsuitable or useless to be spoken of were not spoken of. If anything were brought to him in confidence it was not necessary to say diligently and fearfully that it must not be told of; it would not be told of of itself with him. In repeated instances of curious or doubtful personal matters when others of us came to know about them it appeared that he had known for a long time. Such things did not seem to make any ferment in his mind, or to be trying to creep or ooze out of him. It was as if a bullet had dropped into a well. With some of his descendants, or others, such curious matters have been as

corks thrown upon the water. They might be diligently held under, but their disposition has been to stay upon the top. In the well of his mind such corks turned to stone.

So as to sharp words. My father had clear and sharp opinions as to wrong doings, and he spoke clearly when he thought it was needed, and not often when it was not needed. Not many useless and disagreeable remarks of his making came back to trouble him, or went about doing mischief. Once as we were sitting at table a lady visiting with us, asked my father if he knew that it was currently reported at the village that he had said of the man then pastor of the Baptist church that he was "a pretty poor pattern of a preacher," or words to that effect. My father did not seem to be either much informed or much agitated as to this subject. After a little while the lady went on to say that she had not felt clear about the story herself, and had gone to the person who was found to have started it and had asked her directly if Col. Rice had ever told her that the Baptist minister was a poor pattern of a preacher, and she finally said that she did not know positively

as Col. Rice had ever told her that exactly in so many words, but she knew what he thought by his looks while the man was preaching. I doubt if my father's looks at the meeting house were ever open fairly to such an interpretation, but his look at the table when the story came to its end was interesting.

My father had a good opinion in general of his neighbors and of the people of the town. He seldom spoke anywhere of any of them except in terms of respect and friendliness. For his near neighbors in particular he had a specially warm regard. But they were people indeed of whom it was easy to think with interest and affection.

My father held a considerable number of offices in the town and elsewhere. He was selectman occasionally, and a member of the school committee, but for no great length of time. He was assessor for a somewhat longer time, and county commissioner for I think six years, or special commissioner for a part of that time, and he was a member of the state house of representatives for one year. He was also for a time a director in

the Conway bank, and for many years in the latter part of his life and until his death he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Mt. Holyoke Seminary at South Hadley.

He was a reliable attendant upon political caucuses and upon temperance meetings and other important public or social gatherings. Occasions of business of many sorts took him often to the village, and the three miles evening ride was a common thing with him, as it was with us all when we came to the years of youth. At his return we could hear the sound of his horse's steps upon the South river bridge a third of a mile away. My mother, if the hour were late or the night were dark, listened for it. We often heard it all of us with satisfaction and a certain relief.

He was early interested in the temperance reformation, which got vigorously under way in New England between the years 1820 and 1830, in many places nearer to the latter date. Alcoholic drinks had been used somewhat before in the family, as they were in all families, for the entertainment of guests, and for the supposed giving of strength to

men that worked. He discontinued these practises and became a total abstainer and a steadfast supporter of the temperance cause. But a few months before his death he wrote a short article for publication in the county paper in which he referred to his acquaintance with active life in connection with both these practises, the moderate use and the total disuse of alcoholic liquors, and he gave his strong testimony to the profit and safety of total abstinence. Along with other things he said that the men who helped him had done more work after the change was made, had broken fewer tools, beaten the cattle less and made less noise. He spoke from memory and certain knowledge.

My father was a great lover of peace. Whenever occasions of difference arose, as they sometimes did even in that community, he used every effort to prevent or heal divisions and to restore a good understanding. He took time when it was necessary for such a matter. I think I should be justified by those that knew him in saying that the measure of respect and confidence entertained with regard to his soundness of judg-

ment and integrity of purpose was such as to give much weight to his counsels making for peace. He stood for justice too as well as peace. Where truth and equity were involved he could be counted on to help maintain them. His temper of mind in this respect was such that his disposition to uphold justice did not interfere with his desire to preserve good feeling so much as it seems to do with some persons. These things too in their right nature are not contrary.

A line of considerate kindness ran through all his plans and orderings. On Sunday afternoons in winter and for half of the year, he did mostly himself alone the chores at the barn — a heavy piece of work with the stock that was kept — so that the boys and hired men might have a pleasanter day of rest. There was everywhere with him a blending of affection and reason, and the strongest markings of his character were in these lines of affectionate reasonableness.

He had respect for the rights of the other members of his own family. His authority was most complete, but it had its bounds which it did not pass, and within its bounds

it was meant to be reasonable. As to my mother, there seemed to be established between him and her, as by organic law if not by written constitution, certain lines of concurrent and separate jurisdiction. They both observed these boundary lines. My father's walking about them was most scrupulous, or rather it was so exact and sure that it seemed not to be due to an exercise of carefulness but to have become in some manner habitual, organic and constitutional within himself. The internal economies of the household were to be ordered by my mother, not by him. Toward the end of his life, as we began to try somewhat to review and consider it, we bethought us concerning his manner at the table, upon which we had not before made any special remark. No one of us could remember that he had ever spoken one word at his meals in the way of complaint or the slightest finding of fault concerning anything that was set before him, or to suggest that anything should be or might be in anywise different, or that anything should be there that was not there. I do not believe that within the last forty years at least of their life together

any one ever heard him speak one such word. If something that he himself had provided and for which he alone was responsible proved of poor quality he might apologize or make some reference to it, but not otherwise. I suppose that if we had heard him finding fault with his food we should have been astonished somewhat as if he had broken out into profanity. And he was not indifferent extraordinarily as to what he ate, and did not omit to express sometimes his satisfaction with the supplies of the table. But here it must be admitted that in these respects he had no great provocation and no heavy trial of patience.

As to household management in general if it ever happened that my father by any oversight made suggestions touching upon affairs that could appear to lie within my mother's province, and if she took notice of it as of that nature, he would forthwith make an apology that would most likely be formal and serious and facetious all together. Thus once I remember his instant saying, "Madame, I am sorry that I have infringed upon your prerogative — yes, prerogative is the word."

Touches of humor were constantly showing themselves in my father's intercourse with all the members of his family. This could hardly have been expected by those who saw him only outside his home, since he made little dealing with wit on any public occasions or in speaking with strangers. But in his home life there was a slight playfulness of temper that was often in action. It is not easy to tell how it went upon him. He was never rough, or brisk. He was far from all levity. He was constantly serious or not far from it. But a quiet humor ran through all his freer hours, as a small brook in summer among the grasses and roots of trees. I was several times and for many days at the home during his last sickness. I told him once of my having lost a coat at a state political convention which I had just attended, and of my taking steps to get it again. "No," said he, "let it go, let it go, and hereafter keep out of such company." He was a strong Republican and had no objection really to my being in that company, but he wished to bestow upon me the admonition. Referring to my prolonged absences from my own home and

people while I was with him he said he hoped that my people would not suffer by my being away so much, and after a moment's pause, he added, "It may be that they will be profited." He had a considerable degree of skill in the use of tools, and he had also for some reason a poor opinion of my capacities in that direction. On one of these days of his sickness I remarked of some article I had made that "it might do for the time being." "You do well," said he, "to use that phrase 'for the time being.' It may be reputable viewed in that light." He was inclined to the use of lengthened and somewhat formal words, a habit which he had gotten I think by his much reading of books of devotion and particularly from the practical observations in Scott's Bible. Upon any inanimate or living thing that tried his temper his usual form of objurgation was to call it "infamous." I made remark to him in the way of pleasantry upon this occasional habit, and for some time the word was not heard. But a few days after some slight article that he tried to manage in his weakness had gone with perversity against his purpose, and he looked at

me and said, "I shall call it infamous without any qualification whatever."

With the first years of my father's Christian life he became interested in missionary work and in other lines of Christian benevolence. He formed and kept a steady purpose of having some share in it. He had a strong sense of responsibility to God for the use of his possessions. He carried his choices and interests, as becomes a Christian man, along with the range of his obligations; and his purpose of benevolent giving became to him a most fortunate power and hope of life. I have from his accounts a record of his gifts from the time he came into the full possession of his farm to the summer of his death, a space of forty-seven and one-half years. The total sum given by him during this period was \$4668.95, or an average of \$98.29 for each year. This does not include his contribution to parish expenses of any sort. He assisted largely in building a meeting house, and he gave \$100 towards the purchase of a parsonage. In all things of this nature he took his share, but I have made account of nothing except what we should

reckon as "benevolent contributions." By far the larger part of what he gave went to the regular benevolent societies, as it was most wise that it should. His general purpose, which in the main he kept, was to give \$100 a year. In prosperous years he went beyond. In times of loss or depression in business he retrenched his gifts. These losses it will be remembered were severe, and in one year his contributions fell to \$21.00. But as he began to recover his standing they arose again rapidly as they might, and always steadily.

I think these figures are in many ways instructive. This is the example of a prudent man in a moderate condition in life. He was a man who held things in fair balance, in a fashion somewhat unusual, and his conclusion and practise have the more value on that account. He was not careless about property. He knew its worth as to effectiveness in life. He was thrifty fairly as to business. It was not especially easy for him to part with money. He lived plainly, not poorly. He spent with carefulness in all matters of light personal gratification for himself or his

family, but he did not cut off absolutely all such expenditures. He gave I think in a reasonable and practicable manner and measure. There may be here and there a person who gives too freely and impoverishes or greatly pinches himself or his family. Such persons are not common. There are others far more numerous, it may be feared, who cast off the obligations and pleasures of Christian charity and greatly pinch their souls. I think my father took the even line of a wise, practical Christian man. And more nearly than almost any one else I have ever known he seems to me to have seen his duties and opportunities and to have chosen his hopes in the light of both worlds. I do not think he gave too much. If he had set his heart upon his possessions, if he had hoarded up sordidly all he gave away, if he had put it at interest at first or invested it and not lost it, as perhaps he might, it would have amounted in the long years to a sum larger than what he did in fact ever possess. He would have left behind when he died a property twice as large as he did leave, but he would have died himself a poorer man.

As he laid out his life he died having some possessions. He had laid up safely whatever value belonged to his Christian gifts in the sight of God. And his habit of placing his own business in some alliance of thought with God tempered for him the cares of life and lifted off their wear and worriment. I think it lengthened his days. I am sure it made them easier and brighter.

So the long swift years went on and passed. In his 86th year my father was still comparatively vigorous. He had rheumatic lameness, and his walk was not erect as in former years, but his eye was clear, and his ear not heavy. His hair was only of an iron gray. His face showed no marks of extreme age. I think a stranger sitting and conversing with him would have supposed him younger by fifteen years. And his mental powers had scarcely in the very least abated. In the spring of 1880 he drove twenty miles to Hawley mountain upon business and returned in one day. But some unusual pressure of occupation and concern connected with the management of his farm came at that time upon him. In April of this year he was

taken with a serious illness, by the developing of a disease of which there had been some slight indication for many years. Except for a brief rally after the first attack, he grew continually more weak through the three months that followed. He was able for the most of the time to be about the house, and he was often out of doors. But he had also many seasons of severe pain, with distress from difficulty of breathing. And he was weary with the loss of sleep, and with inability to sleep. He was patient and trustful.

It was pleasant for us his children that we were able to be much with him. He held his fatherly place, his full headship, his dignity, his kindly and steadfast reasonableness of Christian temper. The certain view of the approaching end increased, befittingly, the seriousness of a life always serious. But it did not cast any gloom upon him. He was not free from natural apprehensions, but he was not afraid to die. "I ought to be willing," he said, "to die by the faith I have lived by." He breathed what he might of the open air, and looked what he could upon the familiar fields and hills. In the wakeful and

often painful hours of the early morning, before the sun had risen, he heard the songs of the multitudes of birds from the tops of the maple trees. He sat often before the southern kitchen door from which across the valley my mother's early home was in sight. Here was his last look out upon the earth, in the places he had known so well. Sitting here on the afternoon of Saturday, July 10th, he was seized with sudden weakness and distress and was assisted to his bed, from which he did not rise.

As the evening came on he wished the family called together for prayer. He leaned upon his arm, supported by one of his daughters. He prayed in a portion of his prayer respecting himself, speaking in the first person, as we had never heard him before. It was his personal and household prayer, both together. In each part he began with giving thanks. He described himself, speaking before God, as "thine unworthy servant about to die." His prayer was at first concerning the things of the Christian salvation, as it would have been on any day of his life. He gave thanks for the word of God, for the pro-

vision for the pardon of sins and the offers of the gospel. He prayed that we might all accept it; that our hearts might be renewed and that we might be able to lead Christian lives. Then referring to himself he prayed that his soul might be renewed and his sins forgiven, that he might not be deceived as to his hopes, and that the Lord would take him to be with his redeemed children. Then when half the prayer was passed and we feared he might not have strength to finish, he prayed for his family and friends. He first gave thanks. He thanked God for his loving wife, with whom, he said, "I have lived so long and with whom I hope to be speedily reunited." Then he gave thanks for his "affectionate children," and for his "kind friends and neighbors." Then he made petition for each of these in order, as he had given thanks. He prayed for his wife, and for his children, mentioning his son and his daughters, praying "that grace might be given them in the ordering of their households." Then he prayed for the grandchildren, for whom there had been a fear that he might not remember them distinctively. He prayed that

God might bless them all, and that they might "all be gathered into the Christian fold." Then he prayed in terms of affection for his kind friends and neighbors, and for all that had lived upon the place. And he closed with the prayer that we might all be brought together in heaven.

Then he called me by name, and asked me to pray. I replied with the answer that was in all our thoughts, that he had prayed for us all and for all that could be prayed for. But he said, "Pray, a brief prayer, brief." I offered what prayer I might and he said "amen" at the close.

These were almost his last conscious acts, his prayer, his command to his son to pray. He reviewed his life, with thankfulness and a humble trust; he laid down his family headship, and committed his soul to his Saviour and his God.

With the following morning he was but partly awake. He remained for three or four days, but scarcely in life. And he passed from us on the early morning of Thursday, July 15th.

The funeral was upon the next day, the

86th anniversary of his birth. The service was conducted by the esteemed pastor of the church. His children and many neighbors and friends were there. There were sung the hymns:

“Through every age, eternal God.”

“There is a land of pure delight.”

“Why do we mourn departing friends?”

And he was laid in the ancient burial place, with his grave in the line of the graves of two generations before him.

The soft rains fell soon; and the summer sun smiled upon the fields that seemed still to be his. We were not left without remaining thankfulness and faith. Yet it scarcely seemed to us fitting that this course of nature should continue onward upon these lands — and they no longer his.

Our mother continued for nine years with us. She was most submissive and patient and trustful. She gave up largely the cares and directions respecting the household which she had kept for many years so fully, and had before only in part surrendered. Yet she welcomed her children and her children's children

in their visits to her home with continuing interest and affection and with sprightliness of mind. She still had care when they left that something from the farm or house should be taken with them. But her thoughts were much upon the past, and the future. Her memory was filled with hymns and passages of poetry learned in her childhood and youth, portions of which she often quoted upon appropriate occasions — and she waited in her lot.

Always as we left her, we thought we might not see her again. At my last visit, as I came away I said, as I was accustomed to do, "The Lord be with you, mother." And she said, "good bye," calling me by name, "you will try to do your duty, won't you." These were her last words to me. On the next day which was the Sabbath she sat at the table and gave thanks to God at the head of her household. In the afternoon, taken probably by some sudden faintness, she fell upon the floor, where she had long walked in strength. And she did not recover from the injury and the shock. She died two days after, Aug. 6th, 1889. We made for her another in the line of graves,

and sang or read in part the same Christian hymns. And the long life the two had begun there in the home together was ended.

This is the earthly end. This is the day of man, — the songs of the birds as the dawn begins, the morning freshness, the mid-day life, the lengthening shadows, the setting sun.

This is not the end. I do not speak now further for a single family, but for all the households of the Christian faith. Our friends that have gone from us are in heaven. Their friends were gathered there before them. They are not dead. Their bodies only rest for a time in the soil of the earth, whose dust is sacred. Their lives are within the power of God. Their souls, with all their rational affections, have survived and are now immortal. The end of their faith has not been lost. The faith of God with them has not been broken. They have fulfilled and reached the purposes they valued most and chose. They have entered the pure inheritance of the children of God. They serve and behold the Lord whose righteousness here they began in part to copy, and on whose power and grace they wholly rested.

It belongs to us here to be followers of their faith, their humility and their patient carefulness. We need not give way to fear. Our lives will be sustained of God, and our hopes fulfilled with him.

A Song of the Earth

Thine earth, O God, thy children love,
Its summer rains, its silent trees,
The gold and softening blue above,
The midday warmth, the evening breeze.

Here are the homes our childhood knew,
Our mothers' sheltering household fires,
The fields where grains and grasses grew,
The ways long trodden by our sires.

Its fairest thoughts their end reveal,
Each grateful hour the past recalls.
On all its lights the shadows steal,
With dawn of day the twilight falls.

We do not yield our souls to fear,
With care we catch a Father's voice,
The distant song of hope we hear.
The path of faith we take of choice.

We hold the word of promise given
Our life shall have a second birth,
Beneath a freshly kindling heaven
Upon the new abiding earth.

The Arakelian Press
364-372 CONGRESS ST.
BOSTON, MASS.



